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OFFSHORE HISTORIC ARTIFACT SURVEY GAAN POINT AGAT SMALL 1/1
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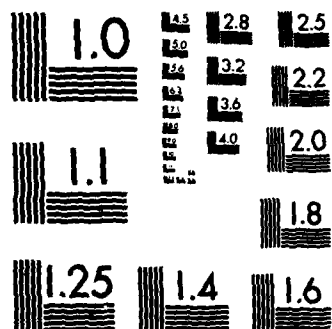
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MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A



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OFFSHORE HISTORIC ARTIFACT SURVEY
GAAN POINT, AGAT SMALL BOAT HARBOR
TERRITORY OF GUAM

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Department of Anthropology
BERNICE P. BISHOP MUSEUM
Honolulu, Hawaii

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INTRODUCTION

This offshore historic artifact survey was undertaken by Pacific Studies Institute on a sub-contract basis for the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii, under their contract DACW84-77-C-0019 (Mod. No. P00011) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The project involved the underwater survey of the reef and channel immediately south of Gaan Point, along Agat Beach, Guam, in the area proposed for a small boat basin (Fig. 1).

The proposed boundaries of this project as indicated by the map provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Fig. 2) extend approximately 1,800 ft south of Gaan Point and 700 ft west from the shoreline, with an additional extension of 300 ft into the channel, situated directly adjacent to the farthestmost extension of Gaan Point. These boundaries enclose an area of approximately 16 hectares.

The survey described below was conducted on January 23, 1978, and was carried out by the authors and Mr. Nolan Hendricks, a staff member of Pacific Studies Institute.

LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT

The project area is situated immediately south of Gaan Point, a small projection emanating from Agat Beach, which lies along the southwest coast of Guam, south of Orote Peninsula (Fig. 2).

The majority of the project area is composed of shallow coral reef interspersed by a sandy bottom. Near the tip of Gaan Point, the reef shelf drops off sharply to form a natural channel.

Within the federal construction project area, live coral coverage is practically nil (U.S. Army Engineer District 1977:3-5; Eldridge, Dickinson, & Moras 1977:38-39, 64, 81).

BACKGROUND

To date no archaeological materials dating to the prehistoric period have been found along the shore proximal to our survey area. Earlier surveys in the general Agat area have yielded prehistoric sherds in beach areas, although



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these may have been redeposited through stream processes from sites farther inland (Price Ms.:3).

Agat Beach in general, and more particularly the area around Gaan Point, figured prominently in the American liberation of Guam during World War II. Four U.S. battleships directed main-battery fire against Asan and Agat beaches starting on July 19, 1944. Two days later, on July 21, 1944, the American invasion of Guam began with U.S. troops landing at Asan and Agat. Supported by main-battery fire from the U.S.S. *Pennsylvania*, the first provisional Marine Brigade stormed the landing beaches at Agat, designated as Yellow 1, Yellow 2, White 1 and White 2 (Fig. 3). The project area begins at the interface between Yellow 2 and White 1, extending into the latter area. Beardsley (1964) estimates that 2,000 rounds of 5-inch shells and 5,000 rounds of 40-mm shells were fired at Agat. Japanese shore defenses in the general area included numerous pillboxes and concrete gun emplacements, many of which remain, though in poor condition (cf. Price Ms.).

FIELD METHODS

As indicated in the scope of work (1 December 1977), the reef portion of the project area could be surveyed on foot, although it was necessary to use divers in the deeper channel section.

Given the relatively recent military impact outlined above, care was used in handling of all metallic objects. Because of the possibility of discovering ordnance within the reef, it was decided, prior to our survey, that all objects would be left in place unless positively identified as non-ordnance.

Unusual current and surf conditions in the channel hindered, though did not prevent, our underwater survey in that area.

Overview photos were taken (Figs. 4 and 5), and Feature 1 was mapped.

SURVEY RESULTS

Within the reef area, debris was largely concentrated within a band approximately six meters wide that ran proximal to and parallel to the shore.

Probably the result of long-shore currents and tide action, this concentration of materials falls outside of the boundaries delineated by the Corps, with the exception of the southern boundary, which includes approximately 500 ft of shoreline.

Materials observed within this band include recent debris such as bottles, auto parts, and tin cans--materials that also existed farther onshore. Additionally, modern debris of less certain age was observed. This included sheets of corrugated metal and numerous unidentifiable pieces of metal that have become encrusted with coral. Of the latter, all were badly decayed or too fragmented for identification. None of the items observed exhibited any recognizable general configuration.

The remains of a collapsed Japanese pillbox (Feature 1) were found under 2 ft of water c. 12 meters from the line of strand vegetation and 40 meters south of the base of Gaan Point (Fig. 2), c. 5 meters west of a single, large, apparently stationary boulder. This feature is located outside the proposed federal construction project area. The walls of the pillbox have collapsed seaward and appear somewhat intact (Figs. 6 & 7). The majority of the foundation is still secured on the reef, though two small pieces lay immediately to the north. No artifacts were found that could be directly associated with the feature.

The outer reef section within the project area appears to have been swept clean by stronger tidal activities. Few objects were observed in this area.

The channel area exhibited a scattering of debris. The sunken vessel previously recorded by the Corps of Engineers was not observed, possibly because diving activities were hindered by strong currents. Two pieces of heavy cable were observed in the channel, as was a military-style anchor. Other, coral-crusted objects were observed but not identified.

DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION OF DATA

From the above discussion, it is apparent that the cultural remains observed in the Gaan Point area are either recent or poorly preserved, and of undetermined age. No prehistoric artifacts were found.

The majority of debris is located in areas outside the proposed project area and therefore should not receive any primary impact. Of course, there remains the possibility that invasion-related materials are imbedded in the reef and camouflaged by coral growth. Certainly these would not be large items, but there may be ordnance that could still be live.

The pillbox feature encountered offers additional evidence of the Japanese defense system that lined the beaches in Agat Bay (Fig. 8). No materials observed near the feature could be associated with its use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, there was a general paucity of materials within the proposed project area and those materials that did fall inside the boundaries appeared to be largely modern debris.

In the channel area, a retrieval of materials (e.g., the anchor) should be undertaken, as well as further investigation of the cables, which may have served as defensive blockades for the Japanese. Since Feature 1, the pillbox, is part of Agat Invasion Beach, a National Register site, it is recommended that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation be consulted to determine whether or not it should be preserved. It appears that enough of the original feature remains so that restoration would be possible if desirable.

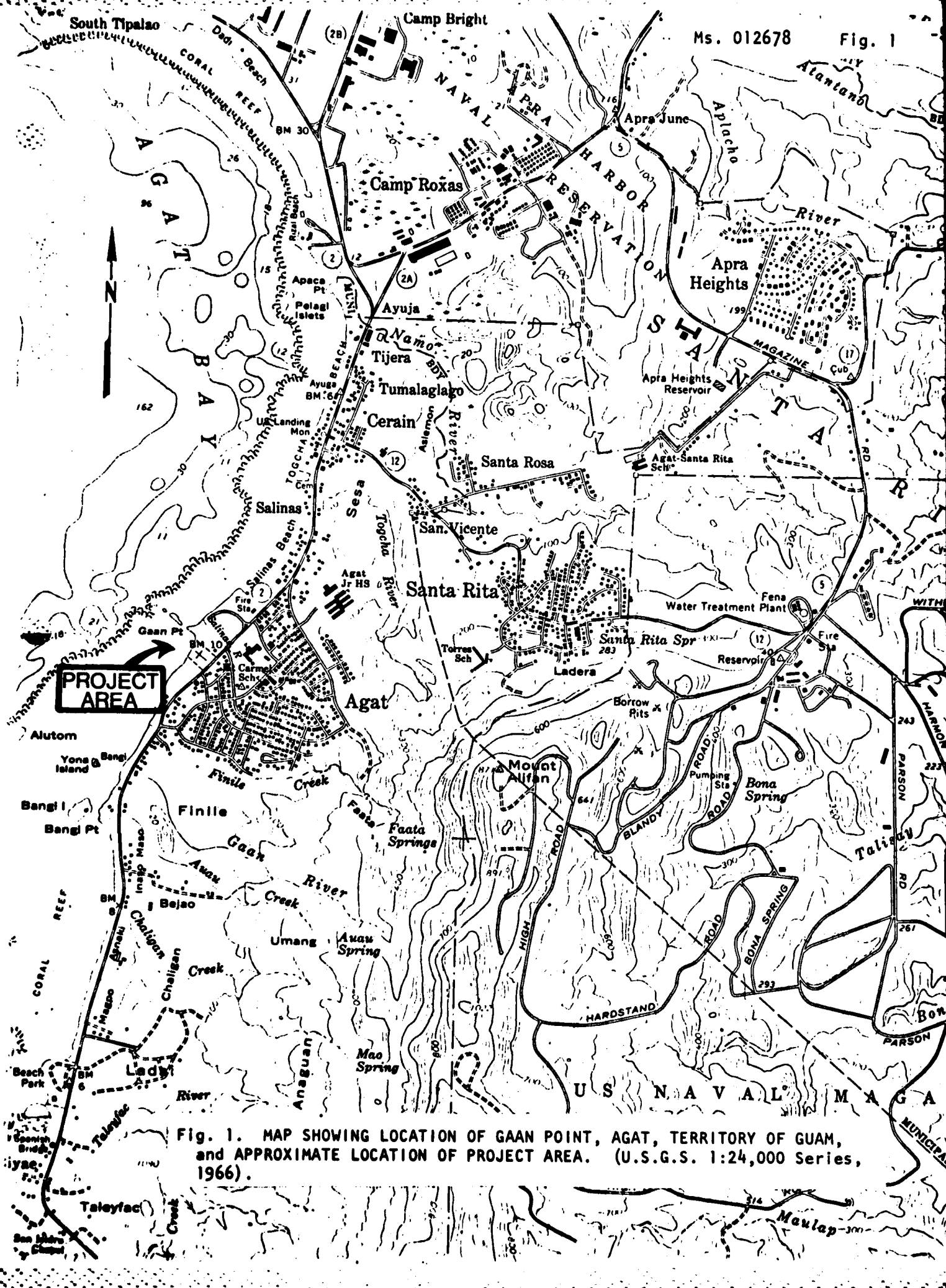


Fig. 1. MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF GAAN POINT, AGAT, TERRITORY OF GUAM, and APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF PROJECT AREA. (U.S.G.S. 1:24,000 Series, 1966).

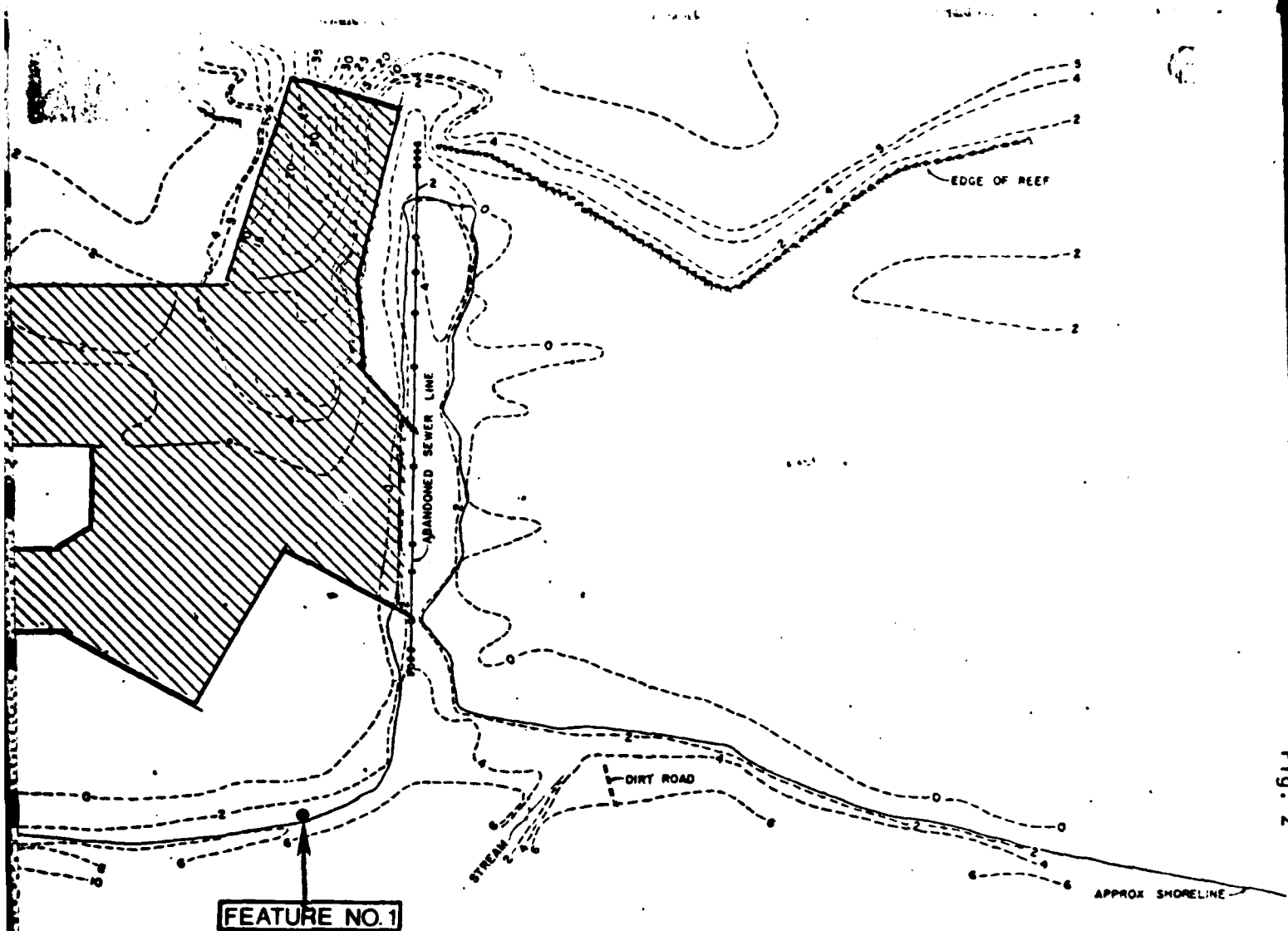
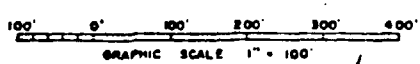


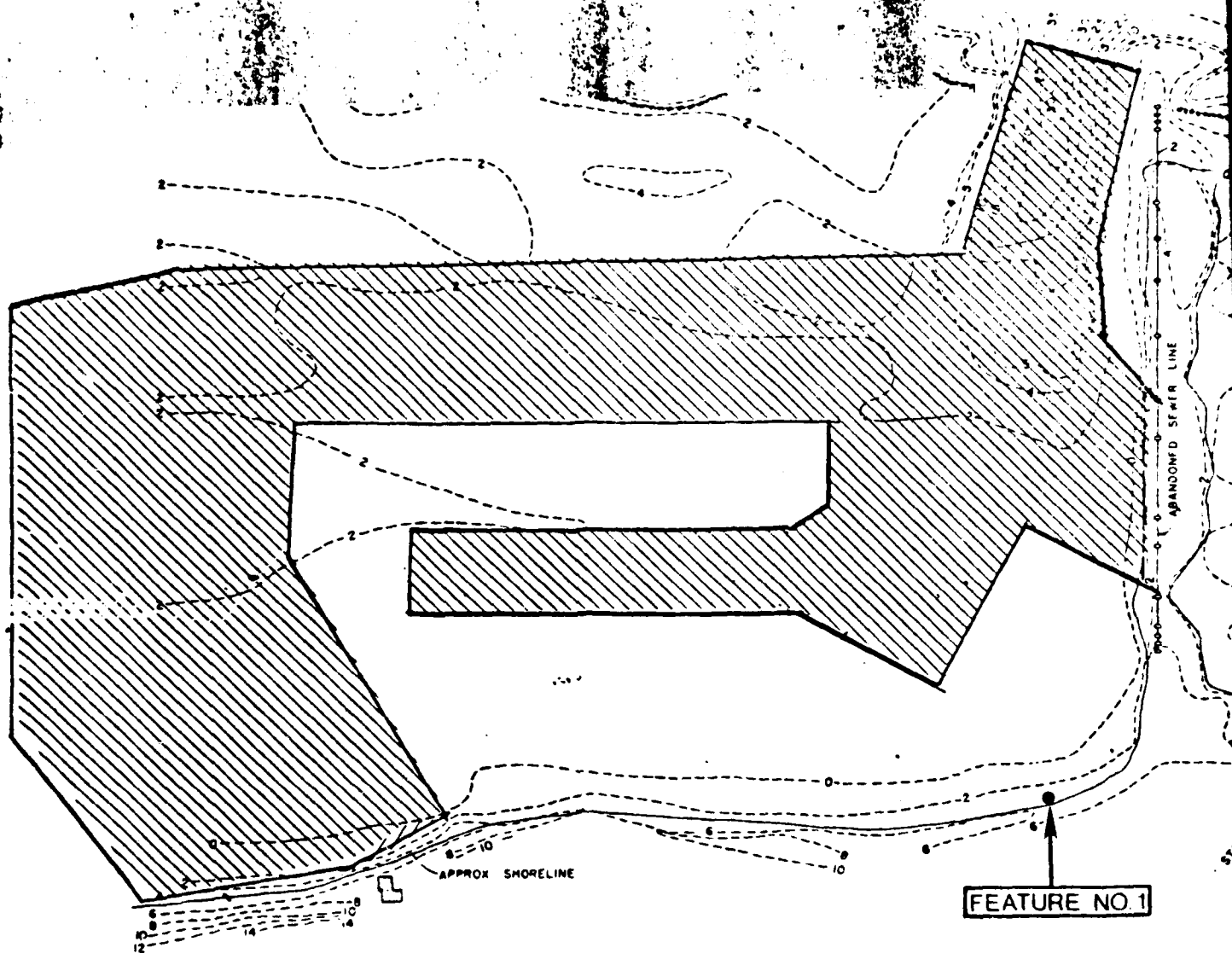
Fig. 2

ALL DATUM IS MEAN LOWER LOW WATER

SHOWING BOUNDARIES OF FEDERAL CONSTRUCTION TERRITORY OF GUAM. Note location of



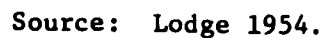
AGAT HARBOR
 OFFSHORE HISTORIC ARTI
 SURVEY AT GAAN POINT,
 AGAT SMALL BOAT HARBOR,
 U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, HONOLULU



NOTE

1 VERTICAL DATUM IS MEAN LOWER LOW WATER
(M.L.L.W.)

Fig. 2. MAP SHOWING BOUNDARIES OF FEDERAL CONSTRUCT
PROJECT AREA, TERRITORY OF GUAM. Note location of
of Feature 1.



**Fig. 3. MAP SHOWING WWII LANDING PLAN,
AGAT INVASTION BEACH, GUAM.**



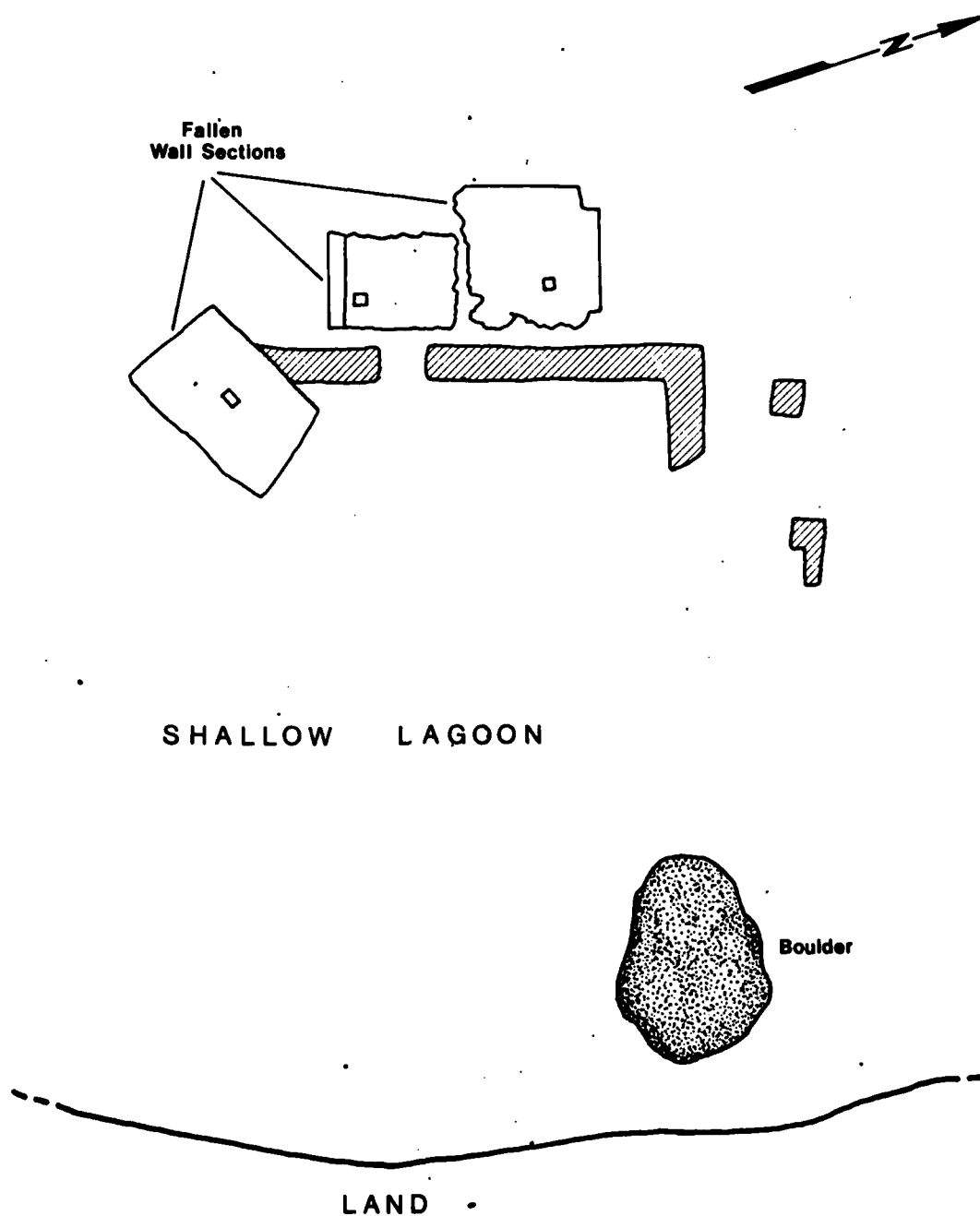
Fig. 4. VIEW OF GAAN POINT, AGAT, GUAM,
FACING WEST.



Fig. 5. REEF AREA OFF GAAN POINT, AGAT,
GUAM, FACING SOUTHWEST.



Fig. 6. VIEW OF FEATURE 1, JAPANESE PILLBOX,
UNDERWATER NEAR GAAN POINT, AGAT, GUAM.



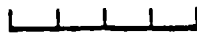
AGAT BASIN UNDERWATER SURVEY
FEATURE NO. 1
JAN. 25, 1978

FOUNDATION

0 5m.

Fig. 7. PLAN OF PILLBOX FEATURE 1,
GAAN POINT, TERRITORY OF GUAM.

SITE MAP FORM



SCALE IN _____



North Arrow

6 6 -

0 2 -

1 0 5 4

QUAD IDENTIFICATION NO.

MAPPING TECHNIQUE: _____

AGAT INVASION
BEACH

— NOT TO SCALE —

(TOPOGRAPHIC MAP OF GUAM (1948)
1:24,000PHILIPPINE
SEA

SEA

FEATURE NO. 1

ALUTOM

(B) Coastal Gun

BANGI IS.

Concrete enclosure

(C)

Pillbox

(A)

(D) Pillboxes

Gaon Pt.

Pillboxes

(E)

U.S. LANDING
MONUMENT

Highway 2A

Highway 12

(F) Coastal Gun

Bangi Is.

River

Fipile Creek

Gaon River

Awar Creek

area detailed

Fig. 8. MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF FEATURES AT AGAT INVASION BEACH (Site 66-02-1054). [Site map form from Guam Register of Historic Places.] Note approximate location of Feature 1, recorded during the present survey.

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